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Sent: Saturday, December 31, 2005 7:59 PM
To: Farak, Sonja (DPH)
Subject: Winter 2006 GIC Benefit News

GIC Plans to Give Members Incentives For Choosing Quality, Cost-Effective Physicians

Annual Enrollment is April 19-May 17 for Changes Effective July 1, 2006

Annual enrollment will soon be here and with it some changes in all of the GIC's non-Medicare plans except the Basic Commonwealth Indemnity Plan.

Benefit Statement News

Every year in late January, the GIC sends you an overview of your benefits to help you keep your records up to date. In cooperation with the State Board of Retirement (SRB), we are adding a new feature this year! Active employees who participate in the State Board of Retirement system will receive State Board of Retirement beneficiary details.

Benefit Statement Reminder

Be sure to review all of the information on the front of your benefit statement to ensure that it is up to date. Failure to provide timely notice of personal information changes may affect your insurance coverage and may result in your being billed for health care services provided to you or a family member. *For answers to common GIC benefit questions, and for GIC forms, see the "Your GIC Records" section of our website.*

GIC Health Plans Earn National Quality Awards

Three of the GIC's health plans earned national recognition for quality in 2005.

Leapfrog Hospital Report Card Survey Results as of October 31, 2005

Medical mistakes are the fifth-leading cause of death in the United States. They cause more deaths than car accidents, breast cancer and AIDS. Even when mistakes made in hospitals are not fatal, they still can lead to injury, disability, longer hospital stays, or a longer recovery. The Leapfrog Group, a coalition of more than 170 organizations devoted to improving patient safety, has identified four patient safety steps that are scientifically proven to reduce death and injury. See how Massachusetts hospitals rate, using this tool in conjunction with talking with your doctor and health plan about your hospital options.

Diabetes Prevalence Increasing at Alarming Rates - How You Can Lower Your Risk

Eat right, exercise, and maintain your ideal body weight. You have heard it many times, but more and more Americans are overweight, leading to alarming increases in the prevalence of diabetes, a disease in which the body is unable to produce or unable to properly use and store glucose, a form of sugar.

Check out the winter 2006 newsletter, which includes these topics and more. Active employees receive the newsletter at your agency. You may also download a copy from our website.